

# A Bayesian Estimation Procedure for One-Parameter Exponential Survival Distributions Facilitated by an Inverted Gamma Prior

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## ABSTRACT

A Bayesian estimation procedure for one-parameter exponential survival distributions facilitated by an inverted gamma prior was performed in this study using data obtained from the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH). The exponential survival distributions are just one amongst a number of distributions adopted for tackling problems in survival analysis, and may occur either in one parameter or two parameters under uncensored or censored conditions. The review of literature exposed the absence of studies addressing the need for an alternative procedure that carefully considered the peculiarities of the exponential survival distribution; hence, this study aimed to address this gap. Based on this, a Bayesian estimation technique was employed to estimate only the parameter of the one-parameter exponential survival distribution under uncensored and censored circumstances, with the survivorship and hazard functions deduced, thereafter. The results obtained showed that the parameter of the exponential survival distribution ( $\lambda$ ) existed both for the one-parameter uncensored and censored cases of the exponential survival distribution, with known expressions. Both the MLE and Bayesian estimation results were simulated using real-life data, and the results showed near-convergence of the MLE and Bayesian estimation for unit values of the parameters of the inverted gamma prior used in the study.

**Keywords:** Bayesian Estimation Procedure, One-Parameter Exponential Survival Distributions, Inverted Gamma Prior

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the study

In industries, the interest of process engineers may often be the estimation of the time available until a machine fails, while the interest of specialists in the clinical sciences may be the estimation of the time available: until a tumor reoccurs, until a cardiovascular death after some treatment intervention, until AIDS overwhelms an HIV infected person, etc. [1; 2]. Without the adoption of appropriate statistical know-how, these professionals may rely solely on intuition or experience for estimating such time [2]. The need to estimate such times non-intuitively, with high level of precision, has birthed the concept of survival analysis in statistics; and this technique has proven to be efficient [1; 2].

The area of survival analysis uses a host of techniques and statistical routines [3; 4]. As a statistical concept, survival analysis estimates the expected time duration until one or more events (such as death in biological organisms, and failure in mechanical systems) happen [5; 6]. Since its initiation in the early parts of 1940s, as a very useful bio-statistical tool, several statistical distributions like: exponential, Weibull, log-normal, gamma, generalized gamma, and log-logistic distributions, have all been adopted for studies on survival analysis, with the exponential survival distribution being the most commonly used distribution out of the lot [14; 15; 16; 17; 18]. More so, all these used distributions, as evidenced in literature, have had their parameters estimated via the general maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) routine, and this has no doubt produced formidable results;

and with the parameter estimates for these distributions, their survival and hazard functions have been obtained [19; 20; 22].

In recent times, to allow for advancements in statistical theory along the direction of exploring alternative estimation routines to the MLE, researchers have begun to attempt the adoption of Bayesian routine for achieving all (and even more) of what the MLE has been used to achieve with the afore-mentioned survival distributions [23; 24; 25; 26]. But one encountered problem, among several, has remained the nature of prior (informative or non-informative), and the suitability of prior (be it the: gamma, inverted gamma, Rayleigh, etc.) to be used [28; 29; 31]. In this study, an informative prior (the inverted gamma distribution) has been adopted, not only for the aim of obtaining Bayesian estimates of the one-parameter exponential distribution, but also for making inference about their survivorship and hazard functions under censored and uncensored circumstances.

## Statement of the problem

One of the most commonly used distributions in survival analysis is the exponential survival distribution, be it for the one-parameter case or two-parameter case (with or without covariates). As evidenced in literature, Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) has been used a lot for estimating parameters of one-parameter and two-parameter exponential survival distributions, and for obtaining their survival and hazard functions. And, although the MLE procedure has remained very efficient for achieving this, its usage yet restricts survival analysts to just one choice of estimation procedure. The absence of an attempt, in literature, to proffer the use of the Bayesian alternative to the MLE for achieving the same results, with a suitable informative prior, limits statistical theoretical advancement, going forward. Thus, this study is a foremost attempt in this regard.

## Aim and objectives of the study

This study aims to perform a Bayesian estimation for one-parameter exponential survival distributions facilitated by an inverted gamma prior. In line with achieving the stated aim, the objectives of the study are to: (i) review the MLE procedure for obtaining the survivorship and hazard functions under (uncensored and censored conditions), (ii) adopt Bayesian estimation procedure for obtaining the survivorship and hazard functions (under uncensored and censored conditions), and (iii) simulate the MLE and Bayesian alternative on real-life data.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### MLE for data with right-censored observations

Suppose that persons were followed to death or censored in a study. Let  $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_r, t_{r+1}^+, t_{r+2}^+, \dots, t_n^+$  be the survival times observed from the  $n$  individuals, with  $r$  exact times and  $(n - r)$  right-censored times. Assume that the survival times follow a distribution with density function  $f(t, \mathbf{b})$ , and survivorship function  $S(t, \mathbf{b})$ , where  $\mathbf{b} = (b_1, \dots, b_p)$  denotes unknown  $p$  parameters  $b_1, \dots, b_p$  in the distribution. If the survival time is discrete (that is, it is observed at discrete time only), then  $f(t, \mathbf{b})$  represents the probability of observing  $t$ , and  $S(t, \mathbf{b})$  represents the probability that the survival or event time is greater than  $t$  [7]. In other words,  $f(t, \mathbf{b})$  and  $S(t, \mathbf{b})$  represent the information that can be obtained respectively from an observed uncensored survival time and observed right-censored survival time [8]. Therefore, the product  $\prod_{i=1}^n f(t_i, \mathbf{b})$  represents the joint probability of observing the uncensored survival times, and  $\prod_{i=r+1}^n S(t_i^+, \mathbf{b})$  represents the joint probability of those right-censored survival times. The product of these two probabilities, denoted by  $L(\mathbf{b})$ ,

$$L(\mathbf{b}) = \prod_{i=1}^n f(t_i, \mathbf{b}) \prod_{i=r+1}^n S(t_i^+, \mathbf{b})$$

represents the joint probability of observing  $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_r, t_{r+1}^+, t_{r+2}^+, \dots, t_n^+$  [7].

A similar interpretation applies to continuous survival  $L(\mathbf{b})$ , called the likelihood function of  $\mathbf{b}$ , which can also be interpreted as a measure of the likelihood of observing a specific set of survival times, namely:  $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_r, t_{r+1}^+, t_{r+2}^+, \dots, t_n^+$ , given a specific set of parameters  $\mathbf{b}$  [7; 9]. The method of the MLE is to find an estimator of  $\mathbf{b}$  that maximizes  $L(\mathbf{b})$  (or which is most likely to have produced the observed data  $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_r, t_{r+1}^+, t_{r+2}^+, \dots, t_n^+$ ) [8].

Taking the logarithm of  $L(\mathbf{b})$ , and denoting it by  $l(\mathbf{b})$ , gives:

$$l(\mathbf{b}) = \log L(\mathbf{b}) = \sum_{i=1}^r \log[f(t_i, \mathbf{b})] + \sum_{i=r+1}^n \log[S(t_i^+, \mathbf{b})] \quad (1)$$

Then the MLE  $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$  is a  $\mathbf{b}$  in the set of  $\hat{b}_1, \hat{b}_2, \dots, \hat{b}_p$  that maximizes  $l(\mathbf{b})$ :

$$l(\hat{\mathbf{b}}) = \max_{all \mathbf{b}} (l(\mathbf{b}))$$

It is clear that  $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$  is a solution of the following simultaneous equations, which are obtained by taking the derivative of  $l(\mathbf{b})$  with respect to each  $b_j$ :

$$\frac{\partial l(\mathbf{b})}{\partial b_j} = 0 \quad j = 1, 2, \dots, p \quad (2)$$

To obtain the MLE  $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$ , one can use a numerical method. A commonly used numerical method is the Newton-Raphson iterative procedure, which can be summarized as follows [10; 12].

- i. Let the initial values  $b_1, \dots, b_p$  be zero; that is, let

$$\mathbf{b}^{(0)} = 0$$

- ii. The changes for  $\mathbf{b}$  at each subsequent step, denoted by  $\Delta^{(j)}$ , is obtained by taking the second derivative of the log-likelihood function:

$$\Delta^{(j)} = \left[ -\frac{\partial^2 l(\mathbf{b}^{(j-1)})}{\partial \mathbf{b} \partial \mathbf{b}'} \right]^{-1} \frac{\partial l(\mathbf{b}^{(j-1)})}{\partial \mathbf{b}} \quad (3)$$

- iii. Using  $\Delta^{(j)}$ , the value of  $\mathbf{b}^{(j)}$  at  $j^{th}$  step is

$$\mathbf{b}^{(j)} = \mathbf{b}^{(j-1)} + \Delta^{(j)} \quad j = 1, 2, 3, \dots$$

The iteration terminates at, say, the  $m^{th}$  step if  $\|\Delta^{(m)}\| < \delta$ , where  $\delta$  is a given precision, usually a very small value,  $10^{-4}$  or  $10^{-5}$  [11]. Then the MLE  $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$  is defined as

$$\hat{\mathbf{b}} = \mathbf{b}^{(m-1)} \quad (4)$$

The estimated covariance matrix of the MLE  $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$  is given by

$$var(\hat{\mathbf{b}}) = cov(\hat{\mathbf{b}}) = \left[ -\frac{\partial^2 l(\hat{\mathbf{b}})}{\partial \mathbf{b} \partial \mathbf{b}'} \right]^{-1} \quad (5)$$

One of the good properties of a MLE is that if  $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$  is the MLE of  $\mathbf{b}$ , then  $g(\hat{\mathbf{b}})$  is the MLE of  $g(\mathbf{b})$  if  $g(\mathbf{b})$  is a finite function and need not be one-to-one [10; 30].

The estimated  $100(1 - \alpha)\%$  confidence interval for any parameter  $b_i$  is

$$(\hat{\mathbf{b}}_i - Z_{\alpha/2}\sqrt{v_{ii}}\hat{\mathbf{b}}_i + Z_{\alpha/2}\sqrt{v_{ii}}) \quad (6)$$

where  $v_{ii}$  is the  $i^{th}$  diagonal element of  $\hat{V}(\hat{\mathbf{b}})$  and  $Z_{\alpha/2}$  is the  $100(1 - \alpha/2)$  percentile point of the standard normal distribution  $[P(Z > Z_{\alpha/2}) = \alpha/2]$ . For a finite function  $g(b_i)$  of  $b_i$ , the estimated  $100(1 - \alpha)\%$  confidence interval for  $g(\mathbf{b}_i)$  is its respective range  $R$  on the confidence interval in equation (6) [10; 30], that is,

$$R = \{g(\mathbf{b}_i): \mathbf{b}_i \in (\hat{\mathbf{b}}_i - Z_{\alpha/2}\sqrt{v_{ii}}\hat{\mathbf{b}}_i + Z_{\alpha/2}\sqrt{v_{ii}})\} \quad (7)$$

In case  $g(b_i)$  is monotone in  $b_i$ , the estimated  $100(1 - \alpha)\%$  confidence interval for  $g(b_i)$  is

$$R = \{g(\hat{\mathbf{b}}_i - Z_{\alpha/2}\sqrt{v_{ii}}), g(\hat{\mathbf{b}}_i + Z_{\alpha/2}\sqrt{v_{ii}})\} \quad (8)$$

### MLE for data with right-, left-, and interval-censored observations

If the survival times  $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n$  observed for the  $n$  persons consist of uncensored left-, right-, and interval-censored observations, then the estimation procedures are similar [10; 30]. Assume that the survival times follow a distribution with density function  $f(t, \mathbf{b})$  and the survivorship function  $S(t, \mathbf{b})$ , where  $\mathbf{b}$  denotes all unknown parameters of the distribution. Then the log-likelihood function is given by:

$$l(\mathbf{b}) = \log L(\mathbf{b}) = \left\{ \begin{aligned} &\sum \log[f(t_i, \mathbf{b})] + \sum \log[S(t_i, \mathbf{b})] \\ &+ \sum \log[1 - S(t_i, \mathbf{b})] + \sum \log[S(v_i, \mathbf{b}) - S(t_i, \mathbf{b})] \end{aligned} \right\} \quad (9)$$

where the first sum is over the uncensored observations, the second sum is over the right-censored observations, the third sum is over the left-censored observations, and the last sum is over the interval-censored observations, with  $v_i$  as the lower end of a censoring interval [10; 30]. The other steps for obtaining the MLE  $\hat{\mathbf{b}}$  of  $\mathbf{b}$  are similar to the steps shown in section (3.1) by substituting for the log-likelihood function defined in equation (1) with the log-likelihood function in equation (9).

### MLE on the one-parameter exponential survival distribution

The one-parameter exponential distribution has the following function;

$$f(t) = \lambda e^{-\lambda t} \quad (10)$$

survivorship function;

$$S(t) = e^{-\lambda t} \quad (11)$$

and hazard function;

$$h(t) = \lambda \quad (12)$$

where  $t \geq 0$ ,  $\lambda > 0$ . Obviously, the exponential distribution is characterized by one parameter,  $\lambda$ . The estimation of  $\lambda$  by maximum likelihood methods for data without censored observations will be given first followed by the case with censored observations.

### Maximum likelihood estimation of $\lambda$ for data without censored observations

Suppose that there are  $n$  persons in the study and everyone is followed to death or failure. Let  $t_1, t_2, t_3, \dots, t_n$  be the exact survival times of the  $n$  people. The likelihood function, using (10) and (1), is:

$$L = \prod_{i=1}^n \lambda e^{-\lambda t_i}$$

and the log-likelihood function is

$$l(\lambda) = n \log \lambda - \lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_i \quad (13)$$

From equation (2), the MLE of  $\lambda$  is

$$\lambda = \frac{n}{\sum_{t=1}^n t_i} \quad (14)$$

Since the mean  $\mu$  of the exponential distribution is  $1/\lambda$  and a MLE is invariant under a one-to-one transformation, the MLE of  $\mu$  is

$$\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} = \frac{\sum_{t=1}^n t_i}{n} = \bar{t} \quad (15)$$

It can be shown that  $2n\hat{\mu}/\mu$  has an exact chi-square distribution with  $2n$  degrees of freedom. Since  $\lambda = 1/\mu$  and  $\hat{\lambda} = 1/\hat{\mu}$  an exact  $100(1 - \alpha)\%$  confidence interval for  $\lambda$  is

$$\frac{\hat{\lambda} \chi_{2n, 1-\alpha/2}^2}{2n} < \lambda < \frac{\hat{\lambda} \chi_{2n, \alpha/2}^2}{2n} \quad (16)$$

where  $\chi_{2n, \alpha}^2$  is the  $100\alpha$  percentage point of the chi-square distribution with  $2n$  degrees of freedom; that is,  $P(\chi_{2n}^2 > \chi_{2n, \alpha}^2) = \alpha$  [10; 12]. When  $n$  is large (say,  $n \geq 25$ ),  $\hat{\lambda}$  is approximately normally distributed with mean  $\lambda$  and variance  $\lambda^2/n$  [10; 12]. Thus, an approximate  $100(1 - \alpha)\%$  confidence interval for  $\lambda$  is

$$\hat{\lambda} - \frac{\hat{\lambda} Z_{\alpha/2}}{\sqrt{n}} < \lambda < \hat{\lambda} + \frac{\hat{\lambda} Z_{\alpha/2}}{\sqrt{n}} \quad (17)$$

where  $Z_{\alpha/2}$  is the  $100\alpha/2$  percentage point,  $P(Z > Z_{\alpha/2}) = \alpha/2$ , of the standard normal distribution [10; 12]. Since  $2n\hat{\mu}/\mu$  has an exact chi-square distribution with  $2n$  degrees of freedom, an exact  $100(1 - \alpha)\%$  confidence interval for the mean survival time is

$$\frac{2n\hat{\mu}}{\chi_{2n, \alpha/2}^2} < \mu < \frac{2n\hat{\mu}}{\chi_{2n, 1-\alpha/2}^2} \quad (18)$$

### Maximum likelihood estimation of $\lambda$ for data with censored observations

We first consider singly censored and then progressively censored data. Suppose that without loss of generality, the study or experiment begins at time zero with a total of  $n$  subjects. Survival times are recorded and the data become available when the subjects die one after the other in such a way that the shortest time comes first, the second shortest time comes second, and so on [12; 27]. Suppose that the investigator has decided to terminate the study after  $r$  out of the  $n$  subjects have and to sacrifice the remaining  $n - r$  subjects at that time. Then the survival times for the  $n$  subjects are

$$t_{(1)} \leq t_{(2)} \leq t_{(3)} \leq \dots \leq t_{(r)} = t_{(r+1)}^+ = \dots = t_{(n)}^+$$

where a superscript plus indicates a sacrificed subject, and thus  $t_{(i)}^+$  is a censored observation. In this case,  $n$  and  $r$  are fixed values and all of the  $n - r$  censored observations are equal [12; 27].

The likelihood function, using equations (1), (10) and (11), is

$$L = \frac{n!}{(n-r)!} \prod_{i=1}^n \lambda e^{-\lambda t_{(i)}} (e^{-\lambda t_{(r)}})^{n-r}$$

and from equation (2), the MLE of  $\lambda$  is

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{r}{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+} \quad (19)$$

The mean survival time  $\mu = 1/\lambda$  can then be estimated by

$$\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+}{r} \quad (20)$$

It has been shown that  $2r\lambda/\hat{\lambda}$  has a chi-square distribution with  $2r$  degrees of freedom [12; 27]. The mean and variance of  $\hat{\lambda}$  are  $r\lambda/(r-1)$  and  $\lambda^2/(r-1)$  respectively. The  $100(1-\alpha)\%$  confidence interval for  $\lambda$  is

$$\frac{\hat{\lambda} \chi_{2r, 1-\alpha/2}^2}{2r} < \lambda < \frac{\hat{\lambda} \chi_{2r, \alpha/2}^2}{2r} \quad (21)$$

When  $n$  is large, the distribution of  $\hat{\lambda}$  is approximately normal with mean  $\lambda$  and variance  $\lambda^2/(r-1)$  [12; 27]. An approximate  $100(1-\alpha)\%$  confidence interval for  $\lambda$  is then

$$\hat{\lambda} - \frac{\hat{\lambda} Z_{\alpha/2}}{\sqrt{r-1}} < \lambda < \hat{\lambda} + \frac{\hat{\lambda} Z_{\alpha/2}}{\sqrt{r-1}} \quad (22)$$

It has also been shown that  $2r\hat{\mu}/\mu$  has a chi-square distribution with  $2r$  degrees of freedom [12; 27]. Thus, a  $100(1-\alpha)\%$  confidence interval for  $\mu$  is

$$\frac{2r\hat{\mu}}{\chi_{2r, \alpha/2}^2} < \mu < \frac{2r\hat{\mu}}{\chi_{2r, 1-\alpha/2}^2} \quad (23)$$

They also develop test procedures for the hypothesis  $H_0: \mu = \mu_0$  against the alternative  $H_1: \mu < \mu_0$ . One of their rules of action is to accept  $H_0$  if  $\hat{\mu} > c$  and reject  $H_0$  if  $\hat{\mu} < c$ , where  $c = (\mu_0 \chi_{2r, \alpha}^2)/2r$  and  $\alpha$  is the significance level [12]. Or if the estimated mean survival time calculated from equation (20) is greater than  $c$ , the hypothesis  $H_0$  is rejected at the  $\alpha$  level of significance [27].

A slightly different situation may arise in laboratory experiments. Instead of terminating the study after the  $r^{th}$  death, the experimenter may stop after a period of time  $T$ , which may be six months or a year [27]. If we denote the number of deaths between 0 and  $T$  as  $r$ , the survival data may look as follows:

$$t_{(1)} \leq t_{(2)} \leq t_{(3)} \leq \dots \leq t_{(r)} \leq t_{(r+1)}^+ = \dots = t_{(n)}^+ = T$$

Mathematical derivations of the MLE of  $\lambda$  and  $\mu$  are exactly the same and equation (19) can still be used [27].

Progressively censored data come more frequently from clinical studies where patients are entered at different times and the study lasts a predetermined period of time [13]. Suppose that the study begins at time 0 and terminates at time  $T$  and there are a total of  $n$  people entered [12; 27]. Let  $r$  be the number of patients who die before or at time  $T$  and  $n-r$  the number of patients who are lost to follow-up during the study period or remain alive at time  $T$ . The data look as follows:  $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_r, t_{r+1}^+, t_{r+2}^+, \dots, t_n^+$ . Ordering the  $r$  uncensored observations according to their magnitude, we have:

$$t_{(1)} \leq t_{(2)} \leq t_{(3)} \leq \dots \leq t_r, t_{r+1}^+, t_{r+2}^+, \dots, t_n^+$$

The likelihood function, using equations (1), (10) and (11), is

$$L = \prod_{i=1}^n \lambda e^{-\lambda t_{(i)}} \prod_{i=r+1}^n \lambda e^{-\lambda t_i^+}$$

and the log-likelihood function is

$$l(\hat{\lambda}) = n\lambda - \lambda \sum_{i=1}^r t_i - \lambda \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_i^+ \quad (24)$$

and from equation (2), the MLE of the parameter  $\lambda$  is

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{r}{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_i^+} \quad (25)$$

Consequently,

$$\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_i^+}{r} \quad (26)$$

is the MLE of the mean survival time [12; 27]. The sum of all of the observations, censored and uncensored, divided by the number of uncensored observations, gives the MLE of the mean survival time [12; 27]. To overcome the mathematical difficulties arising when all of the observations are censored ( $r = 0$ ). [7] defines

$$\hat{\mu} = \sum_{i=1}^n t_i^+ \quad (27)$$

In practice, this estimate has little value.

The distribution of  $\hat{\lambda}$  for large  $n$  is approximately normal with mean  $\lambda$  and variance:

$$var(\hat{\lambda}) = \frac{\lambda^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (1 - e^{-\lambda T_i})} \quad (28)$$

where  $T_i$  is the time that the  $i^{th}$  person is under observations. In other words,  $T_i$  is computed from the time  $i^{th}$  person enters the study to the end of the study [12; 27]. If the observations times  $T_i$  are not known, the following quick estimate of  $var(\hat{\lambda})$  can be used [7].

$$var^A(\hat{\lambda}) = \frac{\hat{\lambda}^2}{r} \quad (29)$$

Thus, an approximate  $100(1 - \lambda)\%$  confidence interval for  $\lambda$  is, by (6),

$$\hat{\lambda} - Z_{\alpha/2} \sqrt{var^A(\hat{\lambda})} < \lambda < \hat{\lambda} + Z_{\alpha/2} \sqrt{var^A(\hat{\lambda})} \quad (30)$$

The distribution of  $\hat{\mu}$  is approximately normal with mean  $\mu$  and variance:

$$var(\hat{\mu}) = \frac{\mu^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (1 - e^{-\lambda T_i})} \quad (31)$$



Again, a quick estimate is

$$\text{var}(\hat{\mu}) = \frac{\hat{\mu}^2}{r} \quad (32)$$

An approximate  $100(1 - \lambda)\%$  confidence interval for  $\mu$  is then, by (6),

$$\hat{\mu} - Z_{\alpha/2} \sqrt{\text{var}(\hat{\mu})} < \mu < \hat{\mu} + Z_{\alpha/2} \sqrt{\text{var}(\hat{\mu})} \quad (33)$$

### Informative and non-informative priors

Let  $g(\lambda^*)$  be a prior distribution for the parameter  $\lambda^*$  of a distribution. Then, according to [16; 17],

- i. The distribution is an informative prior, if it biases the parameter towards particular values (i.e., an informative prior expresses specific, definite information about a variable);
- ii. The distribution is a non-informative prior, if it does not influence the posterior hyperparameters (i.e., an uninformative prior, or diffuse prior, expresses unclear or general information about a variable).

### The inverted gamma prior

If a random variable  $\lambda$  has the gamma distribution  $\lambda \sim G(\alpha, \beta)$ , then the random variable  $\lambda^* = \frac{1}{\lambda}$  has the inverted gamma distribution  $\lambda^* \sim IG(\alpha, \beta)$  with the density function [16; 17].

$$g(\lambda^* | \alpha, \beta) = \begin{cases} \frac{\alpha^\beta}{\Gamma(\beta)} \left(\frac{1}{\lambda^*}\right)^{\beta+1} e^{-\frac{\alpha}{\lambda^*}}; & \text{for } \alpha > 0; \beta > 0; 0 < \lambda^* < \infty \\ 0, & \text{for the remaining values of } \lambda^* \end{cases}$$

For  $\lambda^* \sim IG(\alpha, \beta)$ , we obtain

$$E(\lambda^*) = \frac{\alpha}{\beta - 1}; \text{ for } \beta > 1$$

And,

$$\text{var}(\lambda^*) = \frac{\alpha^2}{(\beta - 1)^2(\beta - 2)}; \text{ for } \beta > 2$$

### The Bayesian estimation procedure

Let  $x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n$  be a random sample from the density  $f(x; \lambda)$ . Before taking the sample, the distribution of  $\lambda$ ,  $g(\lambda)$  (called a prior distribution), is assumed known. The objective in Bayesian estimation of the parameter  $\lambda$  is to determine the distribution  $f(\lambda|x)$  (known as the posterior distribution) after taking the sample.

Let us consider the conditional distribution

$$f(x|\lambda) = \frac{f(x; \lambda)}{g(\lambda)}$$

$$\Rightarrow f(x; \lambda) = f(x|\lambda)g(\lambda) \quad (34)$$

$$\Rightarrow f(\lambda|x) = \frac{f(x; \lambda)}{h(x)} \quad (35)$$



Substituting for equation (34) in equation (35) gives,

$$\Rightarrow f(\lambda|x) = \frac{f(x|\lambda)g(\lambda)}{h(x)} \quad (36)$$

$$\text{But } \int_{\Omega} f(\lambda|x) d\lambda = 1$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\Omega} f(\lambda|x) d\lambda &= \int_{\Omega} \frac{f(x|\lambda)g(\lambda)}{h(x)} d\lambda = 1 \\ \Rightarrow 1 &= \frac{1}{h(x)} \int_{\Omega} f(x|\lambda)g(\lambda) d\lambda \\ \Rightarrow h(x) &= \int_{\Omega} f(x|\lambda)g(\lambda) d\lambda \end{aligned} \quad (37)$$

Putting equation (37) into equation (36) gives

$$\Rightarrow f(\lambda|x) = \frac{f(x|\lambda)g(\lambda)}{\int_{\Omega} f(x|\lambda)g(\lambda)d\lambda} \quad (38)$$

Since we are taking a random sample of this distribution

$$f(x|\lambda) = L(x|\lambda) = \prod_{i=1}^n f(x_i|\lambda)$$

Hence, equation (38) becomes:

$$\Rightarrow f(\lambda|x) = \frac{L(x|\lambda)g(\lambda)}{\int_{\Omega} L(x|\lambda)g(\lambda)d\lambda} \quad (39)$$

The above equation (39) gives  $f(\lambda|x)$  as the posterior Bayes distribution with respect to the prior distribution  $g(\lambda)$ .

Hence,

$$E[\tau(\lambda)] = \int_{\Omega} \tau(\lambda)f(\lambda|x)d\lambda \quad (40)$$

is called the posterior Bayes estimator with respect to the prior distribution  $g(\lambda)$ ; where  $\tau(\lambda)$  is any function of  $\lambda$ .

### An outline of the research estimation procedure

The proposed Bayesian alternative will be implemented with the procedure below.

Step 1: Determine an appropriate prior  $\pi(\lambda)$ .

In this case, the appropriate prior for the one-parameter exponential distribution is the inverted gamma distribution with parameters  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ . That is,

$$\pi(\lambda) = \frac{\alpha^\beta}{\Gamma(\beta)} \left(\frac{1}{\lambda^*}\right)^{\beta+1} e^{-\frac{\alpha}{\lambda^*}} = \frac{\alpha^\beta}{\Gamma(\beta)} \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda\alpha}$$

Step 2: Obtain the Bayesian estimate of  $\lambda$  for data without censored observations.

Here the procedure involved requires that we obtain  $\hat{\lambda}$  thus:

$$\hat{\lambda} = E[\lambda|t] = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \lambda l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda}$$

where,  $l(t|\lambda)$  denotes the likelihood function. That is,

$$l(t|\lambda) = \lambda^n e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$$

Step 3: Obtain the Bayesian estimate of  $\lambda$  for data with censored observations.

Here the procedure involved requires that we obtain  $\hat{\lambda}$  thus:

$$\hat{\lambda} = E[\lambda|t] = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \lambda l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda}$$

where,  $l(t|\lambda)$  denotes the likelihood function. That is,

$$l(t|\lambda) = \prod_{i=1}^r \lambda e^{-\lambda t_{(i)}} \prod_{i=r+1}^n \lambda e^{-\lambda t_{(i)}^+}$$

## RESULTS

### Bayesian estimation for the one-parameter uncensored case

#### Theorem 1

If  $t$  is an uncensored exponential random variable with parameter  $\lambda$ , and the prior density of  $\lambda$  is the inverted gamma with parameters  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , then the estimate of  $\lambda$  provided by the posterior is  $\hat{\lambda}$ , given by:

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$$

#### Proof 1:

Now,  $f(t|\lambda) = \lambda e^{-\lambda t}$ ;  $0 < t < \infty$  is the posterior distribution of the parameter  $\lambda$ . Let  $l(t|\lambda)$  be the likelihood function. Then,

$$\Rightarrow l(t|\lambda) = \prod_{i=1}^n \lambda e^{-\lambda t_{(i)}}$$

$$\Rightarrow l(t|\lambda) = \lambda^n e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$$

Hence,

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{\lambda} &= E[\lambda|t] = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \lambda l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda \lambda^n e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} \frac{\alpha^{\beta}}{\Gamma(\beta)} \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^n e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} \frac{\alpha^{\beta}}{\Gamma(\beta)} \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\frac{\alpha^{\beta}}{\Gamma(\beta)} \int_0^{\infty} \lambda \lambda^n \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\frac{\alpha^{\beta}}{\Gamma(\beta)} \int_0^{\infty} \lambda^n \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{1+n+\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{n+\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{n+\beta+2} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{n+\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{(n+\beta+3)-1} e^{-\lambda (\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{(n+\beta+2)-1} e^{-\lambda (\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} d\lambda}\end{aligned}$$

Let  $u = \lambda (\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha) \Rightarrow \lambda = \frac{u}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} \Rightarrow d\lambda = \frac{du}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)}$

$$\begin{aligned}\Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \left( \frac{u}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} \right)^{(n+\beta+3)-1} e^{-u} \frac{du}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)}}{\int_0^{\infty} \left( \frac{u}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} \right)^{(n+\beta+2)-1} e^{-u} \frac{du}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)}} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\left( \frac{1}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} \right)^{n+\beta+3} \int_0^{\infty} u^{(n+\beta+3)-1} e^{-u} du}{\left( \frac{1}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} \right)^{n+\beta+2} \int_0^{\infty} u^{(n+\beta+2)-1} e^{-u} du} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{1}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} \frac{\Gamma(n + \beta + 3)}{\Gamma(n + \beta + 2)} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{1}{(\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)} + \alpha)} \frac{(n + \beta + 2) \Gamma(n + \beta + 2)}{\Gamma(n + \beta + 2)} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}\end{aligned}$$

Since the mean  $\mu$  of the exponential distribution is  $\frac{1}{\lambda}$  and Bayesian estimation is invariant under one-to-one transformation, then the Bayesian estimate of  $\mu$  is given by:

$$\hat{\mu} = \bar{t} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}}$$

$$\Rightarrow \hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}}$$

$$\Rightarrow \hat{\mu} = \frac{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}{\beta + n + 2}$$

Therefore, the following axiom is established:

### Axiom 1:

(a) The estimate of the survivorship function is given as:

$$\hat{S}(t) = e^{-\hat{\lambda}t} = e^{-\left(\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}\right)t}$$

(b) The estimate of the hazard function is given as:

$$\Rightarrow \hat{h}(t) = \hat{\lambda} = \frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$$

### Bayesian estimation for the one-parameter censored case

#### Theorem 2:

If  $t$  is a censored exponential random variable with parameter  $\lambda$ , and the prior density of  $\lambda$  is the inverted gamma with parameters  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , then the estimate of  $\lambda$  provided by the posterior is  $\hat{\lambda}$ , given by:

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{\beta + n + 2}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}$$

#### Proof 2:

Now,  $f(t|\lambda) = \lambda e^{-\lambda t}$ ;  $0 < t < \infty$  is the posterior distribution of the parameter  $\lambda$ . Let  $l(t|\lambda)$  be the likelihood function. Then,

$$\Rightarrow l(t|\lambda) = \prod_{i=1}^r \lambda e^{-\lambda t_{(i)}} \prod_{i=r+1}^n \lambda e^{-\lambda t_{(i)}^+}$$

$$\Rightarrow l(t|\lambda) = \lambda^r e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)}} \lambda^{n-r} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1+r}^n t_{(i)}^+}$$

$$\Rightarrow l(t|\lambda) = \lambda^r \lambda^{n-r} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)}} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1+r}^n t_{(i)}^+}$$

$$\Rightarrow l(t|\lambda) = \lambda^{r+n-r} e^{-\lambda \sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} - \lambda \sum_{i=1+r}^n t_{(i)}^+}$$

$$\Rightarrow l(t|\lambda) = \lambda^n e^{-\lambda (\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=1+r}^n t_{(i)}^+)}$$

Hence,

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{\lambda} &= E[\lambda|t] = \frac{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \lambda l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda}{\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} l(t|\lambda) \pi(\lambda) d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda \lambda^n e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} \frac{\alpha^\beta}{\Gamma(\beta)} \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^n e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} \frac{\alpha^\beta}{\Gamma(\beta)} \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\frac{\alpha^\beta}{\Gamma(\beta)} \int_0^{\infty} \lambda \lambda^n e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\frac{\alpha^\beta}{\Gamma(\beta)} \int_0^{\infty} \lambda^n e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda \lambda^n \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^n \lambda^{\beta+1} e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{1+n+\beta+1} e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{n+\beta+1} e^{-\lambda [\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+]} e^{-\lambda \alpha} d\lambda} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{n+\beta+2} e^{-\lambda \{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} d\lambda}{\int_0^{\infty} \lambda^{n+\beta+1} e^{-\lambda \{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} d\lambda}\end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Let } u = \lambda \{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\} \Rightarrow \lambda = \frac{u}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}$$

$$\Rightarrow d\lambda = \frac{du}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\int_0^{\infty} \left( \frac{u}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} \right)^{(n+\beta+3)-1} e^{-u} \frac{du}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}}{\int_0^{\infty} \left( \frac{u}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} \right)^{(n+\beta+2)-1} e^{-u} \frac{du}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\left( \frac{1}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} \right)^{n+\beta+3} \int_0^{\infty} u^{(n+\beta+3)-1} e^{-u} du}{\left( \frac{1}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} \right)^{n+\beta+2} \int_0^{\infty} u^{(n+\beta+2)-1} e^{-u} du} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{1}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} \frac{\Gamma(n+\beta+3)}{\Gamma(n+\beta+2)} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{1}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} \frac{(n+\beta+2)\Gamma(n+\beta+2)}{\Gamma(n+\beta+2)} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\lambda} &= \frac{\beta+n+2}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}\end{aligned}$$

Again, since the mean  $\mu$  of the exponential distribution is  $\frac{1}{\lambda}$  and Bayesian estimation is invariant under one-to-one transformation, then the Bayesian estimate of  $\mu$  is given by:

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{\mu} &= \bar{t} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\mu} &= \frac{1}{\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}} \\ \Rightarrow \hat{\mu} &= \frac{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}{\beta + n + 2}\end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the following axiom is established:

### Axiom 2:

(a) The estimate of the survivorship function is given as:

$$\hat{S}(t) = e^{-\hat{\lambda}t} = e^{-\left(\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}\right)t}$$

(b) The estimate of the hazard function is given as:

$$\Rightarrow \hat{h}(t) = \hat{\lambda} = \frac{\beta + n + 2}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}$$

## Simulation

### One-parameter exponential distribution without censored observations

Given the remission times in months for 734 HIV/AIDS patients (Appendix 1). Assuming that remission duration follows the exponential distribution, we can estimate the parameter  $\lambda$  as follows.

Simulating the one-parameter uncensored case, via the MLE, the relapse rate,  $\lambda$ , is

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^n t_i} = \frac{734}{97691} \cong 0.008 \text{ per week}$$

The mean remission time  $\mu$  is then  $\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} = \frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^n t_i} = \bar{t} = \frac{97691}{734} \cong 133.094$  weeks.

Using the analytical procedures given above, confidence intervals for  $\lambda$  and  $\mu$  can also be obtained.

A 95% confidence interval for the relapse rate  $\lambda$ , following  $\frac{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2n,1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2}{2n} < \lambda < \frac{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2n,\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2}{2n}$  is approximately

$$\frac{(0.008)(74.222)}{1468} < \lambda < \frac{(0.008)(129.561)}{1468} = (0.0004, 0.0007)$$

A 95% confidence interval for the mean remission time following  $\frac{2n}{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2n,\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2} < \mu < \frac{2n}{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2n,1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2}$  is

$$\frac{(1468)(133.094)}{129.561} < \mu < \frac{(1468)(133.094)}{74.222} = (1508.031, 2632.400)$$

Once the parameter  $\lambda$  is estimated, other estimates can be obtained. For example, the probability of staying in remission for at least 20 months, can be estimated from:

$$S(t) = e^{-\lambda t} \Rightarrow S(20) = e^{-0.008(20)} = 0.852$$

However, simulating the one-parameter uncensored case by Bayesian alternative, we have a Bayesian estimate of the relapse rate,  $\lambda$ , at  $\alpha = 1$ ;  $\beta = 1$ , gave results consistent with those which were obtained from the uncensored case (via existing method). And this is based on the convergence of the values. That is,

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} = \frac{n + 3}{1 + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}} = \frac{737}{1 + 97691} = \frac{737}{97692} \cong 0.008$$

### One-parameter exponential distribution with censored observations

A study is carried out on 312 AIDS patients. The study is terminated after half (156) of the AIDS are dead with the other half sacrificed at that time. The survival data of the 312 AIDS patients are shown in Appendix 2. Assuming that the failure of these AIDS patients follows an exponential distribution, the survival rate  $\lambda$  and mean survival time  $\mu$  via the MLE method are estimated, respectively, according to

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{r}{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+}$$

And

$$\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+}{r}$$

By

$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{156}{8569+15500} = 0.00648 \text{ per week}$$

and  $\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} = \frac{1}{0.00648} = 154.321$  weeks. A 95% confidence interval for  $\lambda$  by  $\frac{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2r,1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2}{2r} < \lambda < \frac{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2r,\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2}{2r}$  is

$$\frac{(0.00648)(74.222)}{(2)(156)} < \lambda < \frac{(0.00648)(129.561)}{(2)(156)} = (0.002, 0.003)$$

A 95% confidence interval for  $\mu$  following  $\hat{\lambda} - \frac{\hat{\lambda}Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}}}{\sqrt{r-1}} < \lambda < \hat{\lambda} + \frac{\hat{\lambda}Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}}}{\sqrt{r-1}}$  is

$$\frac{(2)(156)(154.321)}{(129.561)} < \lambda < \frac{(2)(156)(154.321)}{(74.222)} = (371.625, 648.706)$$

The probability of surviving a given time for the patients can be estimated from  $S(t) = e^{-\lambda t}$ . For example, the probability that a patient exposed to AIDS will survive longer than 122 months is

$$\hat{S}(122) = \exp[-0.00648(122)] \cong 0.454$$

The probability of dying in 122 months is then  $1 - 0.454 = 0.546$ .

However, assuming that the failure of these AIDS patients follows an exponential distribution, the survival rate  $\lambda$  and mean survival time  $\mu$  via the Bayesian method are estimated, respectively, at  $\alpha = 1$ ;  $\beta = 1$  according to



$$\hat{\lambda} = \frac{\beta + n + 2}{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}} = \frac{1 + 312 + 2}{\{8569 + 15500 + 1\}} = \frac{315}{24070} \cong 0.013$$

$$\hat{\mu} = \frac{1}{\hat{\lambda}} = \frac{\{[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+] + \alpha\}}{\beta + n + 2} = \frac{24070}{315} \cong 76.4$$

Hence,  $\hat{\lambda} = 0.013$  per week and  $\hat{\mu} = 76.4$  weeks. A 95% confidence interval for  $\lambda$  by  $\frac{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2r,1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2}{2r} < \lambda < \frac{\hat{\lambda}\chi_{2r,\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2}{2r}$  is

$$\frac{(0.013)(74.222)}{(2)(156)} < \lambda < \frac{(0.013)(129.561)}{(2)(156)} = (0.003, 0.005)$$

A 95% confidence interval for  $\mu$  following  $\hat{\lambda} - \frac{\hat{\lambda}Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}}}{\sqrt{r-1}} < \lambda < \hat{\lambda} + \frac{\hat{\lambda}Z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}}}{\sqrt{r-1}}$  is

$$\frac{(2)(156)(76.4)}{(129.561)} < \lambda < \frac{(2)(156)(76.4)}{(74.222)} = (183.981, 321.155)$$

Similarly, the probability of surviving a given time for the patients can be estimated from  $S(t) = e^{-\lambda t}$ . For example, the probability that a patient exposed to AIDS will survive longer than 122 months will now be:

$$\hat{S}(122) = \exp[-0.013(122)] \cong 0.205$$

The probability of dying in 122 months is then  $1 - 0.205 = 0.795$ .

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2. These two tables respectively show the parameter estimates of  $\lambda$  using the maximum likelihood estimation and Bayesian estimation procedures under uncensored and censored circumstances. Here, Table 1 and Table 2 show that the parameter estimates of  $\lambda$  exists and are non-zero. Consequently, this implies the existence of the survivorship and hazard functions.

For the one-parameter exponential distribution without censored observations, we note that at  $\alpha = 1$ ;  $\beta = 1$ , using the Bayesian approach gave results consistent with those which were obtained from the uncensored case through the MLE procedure as confirmed by the convergence of the  $\hat{\lambda}$ ,  $\hat{\mu}$ , interval and  $S(t)$  values.

For the one-parameter exponential distribution with censored observations, we see that at  $\alpha = 1$ ;  $\beta = 1$ , using the Bayesian approach gave results with significant divergence from those which were obtained from the uncensored case based on the MLE method as confirmed by the divergence of the  $\hat{\lambda}$ ,  $\hat{\mu}$ , and interval  $S(t)$  values.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has attempted a Bayesian estimation alternative to the MLE for estimating parameters of exponential survival distributions (in one parameter and two parameters) under uncensored and censored scenarios. Two axioms were deduced on what the survivorship and hazard functions are, for each of the estimated parameters. The results obtained from the one-parameter cases showed that known parameter estimates of  $\lambda$ , as well as the survivorship and hazard function, exists, and are similar to the results obtained via the MLE under certain values of the parameters of the prior used (in this case, the inverted gamma distribution).

Table 1 Maximum likelihood estimates for one-parameter exponential survival distribution

ET		Maximum Likelihood		
Sur. Dist.	Case	One parameter		
		$\hat{\lambda}$	$\hat{S}(t)$	$\hat{H}(t)$
$\lambda e^{-\lambda t}$	U	$\frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$	$e^{-\left(\frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}\right)t}$	$\frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$
	C	$\frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+}$	$e^{-\left(\frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+}\right)t}$	$\frac{n}{\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+}$

ET = Estimation Technique; Sur. Dist. = Survival Distribution; U = Uncensored; C = Censored

Table 2 Bayesian estimates for one-parameter exponential survival distribution

ET		Bayesian		
Sur. Dist.	Case	One parameter		
		$\hat{\lambda}$	$\hat{S}(t)$	$\hat{H}(t)$
$\lambda e^{-\lambda t}$	U	$\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$	$e^{-\left(\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}\right)t}$	$\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\alpha + \sum_{i=1}^n t_{(i)}}$
	C	$\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\left\{\left[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+\right] + \alpha\right\}}$	$e^{-\left(\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\left\{\left[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+\right] + \alpha\right\}}\right)t}$	$\frac{\beta + n + 2}{\left[\sum_{i=1}^r t_{(i)} + \sum_{i=r+1}^n t_{(i)}^+\right] + \alpha}$

ET = Estimation Technique; Sur. Dist. = Survival Distribution; U = Uncensored; C = Censored

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

Uncensored Data for Remission Times of HIV Patients

S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT
1	126	36	130	71	130	106	131	141	128	176	134	211	139	246	135
2	130	37	135	72	130	107	135	142	133	177	134	212	132	247	137
3	138	38	130	73	128	108	132	143	134	178	127	213	128	248	134
4	131	39	135	74	137	109	138	144	129	179	132	214	135	249	133
5	139	40	135	75	135	110	138	145	134	180	130	215	127	250	129
6	132	41	132	76	132	111	137	146	137	181	134	216	135	251	140
7	127	42	139	77	127	112	135	147	134	182	138	217	133	252	132
8	138	43	137	78	127	113	139	148	127	183	126	218	130	253	136
9	132	44	132	79	130	114	129	149	139	184	125	219	128	254	138
10	130	45	138	80	129	115	131	150	134	185	134	220	131	255	128
11	134	46	129	81	137	116	139	151	136	186	129	221	136	256	134
12	138	47	136	82	131	117	131	152	133	187	126	222	135	257	135
13	127	48	130	83	130	118	129	153	131	188	131	223	135	258	139
14	136	49	133	84	134	119	131	154	130	189	131	224	131	259	137
15	134	50	133	85	128	120	140	155	139	190	135	225	126	260	135
16	130	51	133	86	139	121	126	156	137	191	135	226	128	261	132
17	138	52	137	87	131	122	140	157	135	192	130	227	132	262	132
18	132	53	129	88	135	123	134	158	136	193	132	228	135	263	133
19	130	54	135	89	127	124	133	159	133	194	133	229	127	264	136
20	133	55	125	90	135	125	141	160	133	195	133	230	133	265	133
21	135	56	133	91	136	126	133	161	126	196	131	231	137	266	137
22	136	57	136	92	132	127	134	162	131	197	132	232	133	267	136
23	130	58	130	93	134	128	131	163	131	198	137	233	130	268	140
24	131	59	129	94	137	129	135	164	136	199	133	234	134	269	130

25	138	60	132	95	130	130	129	165	138	200	131	235	129	270	138
26	130	61	127	96	140	131	133	166	137	201	139	236	135	271	130
27	140	62	137	97	128	132	140	167	129	202	136	237	129	272	135
28	137	63	140	98	128	133	134	168	139	203	137	238	132	273	125
29	135	64	139	99	136	134	132	169	133	204	139	239	134	274	132
30	134	65	135	100	127	135	130	170	137	205	127	240	137	275	130
31	131	66	133	101	133	136	139	171	131	206	134	241	132	276	133
32	137	67	130	102	139	137	133	172	130	207	137	242	132	277	136
33	138	68	136	103	127	138	130	173	132	208	135	243	133	278	133
34	126	69	128	104	133	139	137	174	137	209	133	244	140	279	127
35	136	70	129	105	134	140	135	175	139	210	137	245	129	280	131

S/N = Serial Numbers; RT = Remission Times

Data Obtained from University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH)

S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT
281	131	316	137	351	136	386	131	421	128	456	139	491	135	526	137
282	134	317	132	352	127	387	134	422	134	457	130	492	139	527	131
283	127	318	134	353	128	388	131	423	133	458	127	493	129	528	131
284	139	319	133	354	132	389	135	424	134	459	134	494	124	529	140
285	126	320	133	355	138	390	131	425	135	460	136	495	139	530	137
286	132	321	138	356	133	391	127	426	140	461	133	496	136	531	131
287	140	322	132	357	129	392	133	427	138	462	135	497	139	532	130
288	135	323	136	358	129	393	126	428	131	463	135	498	141	533	133
289	133	324	140	359	135	394	131	429	134	464	127	499	136	534	134
290	134	325	138	360	133	395	131	430	130	465	131	500	141	535	127
291	139	326	131	361	131	396	135	431	132	466	139	501	131	536	130
292	129	327	136	362	130	397	138	432	129	467	135	502	132	537	133
293	128	328	133	363	127	398	130	433	132	468	135	503	132	538	128
294	137	329	138	364	133	399	131	434	132	469	129	504	130	539	129

295	135	330	137	365	131	400	131	435	130	470	139	505	127	540	132
296	131	331	132	366	132	401	140	436	131	471	134	506	131	541	131
297	141	332	130	367	129	402	136	437	140	472	136	507	131	542	129
298	130	333	127	368	128	403	129	438	130	473	140	508	133	543	133
299	133	334	138	369	135	404	131	439	132	474	133	509	126	544	133
300	134	335	138	370	135	405	137	440	133	475	135	510	128	545	137
301	127	336	130	371	135	406	135	441	132	476	128	511	135	546	135
302	134	337	130	372	125	407	130	442	133	477	130	512	131	547	137
303	132	338	133	373	137	408	136	443	137	478	131	513	125	548	130
304	124	339	141	374	134	409	138	444	125	479	133	514	134	549	135
305	132	340	128	375	133	410	133	445	135	480	128	515	137	550	133
306	137	341	137	376	137	411	128	446	133	481	136	516	132	551	134
307	136	342	132	377	136	412	129	447	135	482	129	517	129	552	130
308	134	343	126	378	135	413	131	448	135	483	128	518	126	553	125
309	134	344	128	379	137	414	137	449	130	484	129	519	136	554	136
310	135	345	136	380	133	415	131	450	135	485	137	520	132	555	134
311	133	346	134	381	130	416	129	451	135	486	135	521	130	556	140
312	133	347	136	382	131	417	129	452	133	487	127	522	139	557	131
313	135	348	128	383	133	418	132	453	125	488	131	523	131	558	132
314	128	349	139	384	129	419	134	454	134	489	135	524	133	559	137
315	130	350	133	385	131	420	126	455	132	490	128	525	136	560	139

S/N = Serial Numbers; RT = Remission Times

Data Obtained from University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH)

S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT	S/N	RT
561	126	596	140	631	137	666	135	701	133	736	-	771	-	806	-
562	130	597	134	632	137	667	136	702	132	737	-	772	-	807	-
563	126	598	134	633	127	668	138	703	130	738	-	773	-	808	-
564	127	599	127	634	133	669	130	704	137	739	-	774	-	809	-

565	125	600	138	635	133	670	127	705	137	740	-	775	-	810	-
566	135	601	135	636	131	671	136	706	129	741	-	776	-	811	-
567	133	602	136	637	127	672	139	707	137	742	-	777	-	812	-
568	140	603	140	638	139	673	134	708	134	743	-	778	-	813	-
569	136	604	129	639	133	674	134	709	137	744	-	779	-	814	-
570	135	605	134	640	136	675	132	710	130	745	-	780	-	815	-
571	132	606	137	641	138	676	134	711	134	746	-	781	-	816	-
572	135	607	130	642	134	677	136	712	127	747	-	782	-	817	-
573	129	608	130	643	132	678	130	713	133	748	-	783	-	818	-
574	139	609	134	644	137	679	133	714	131	749	-	784	-	819	-
575	128	610	133	645	132	680	138	715	128	750	-	785	-	820	-
576	132	611	140	646	132	681	140	716	128	751	-	786	-	821	-
577	133	612	135	647	130	682	135	717	130	752	-	787	-	822	-
578	130	613	140	648	139	683	139	718	129	753	-	788	-	823	-
579	139	614	133	649	129	684	129	719	133	754	-	789	-	824	-
580	133	615	135	650	139	685	131	720	130	755	-	790	-	825	-
581	130	616	136	651	134	686	126	721	133	756	-	791	-	826	-
582	128	617	134	652	140	687	133	722	138	757	-	792	-	827	-
583	136	618	130	653	132	688	132	723	133	758	-	793	-	828	-
584	137	619	138	654	133	689	130	724	137	759	-	794	-	829	-
585	132	620	139	655	140	690	128	725	137	760	-	795	-	830	-
586	126	621	138	656	140	691	139	726	139	761	-	796	-	831	-
587	135	622	139	657	137	692	137	727	133	762	-	797	-	832	-
588	133	623	137	658	128	693	133	728	134	763	-	798	-	833	-
589	139	624	130	659	139	694	132	729	135	764	-	799	-	834	-
590	139	625	136	660	130	695	135	730	140	765	-	800	-	835	-
591	135	626	132	661	137	696	132	731	139	766	-	801	-	836	-
592	134	627	135	662	132	697	131	732	139	767	-	802	-	837	-



<b>593</b>	135	<b>628</b>	134	<b>663</b>	130	<b>698</b>	137	<b>733</b>	125	<b>768</b>	-	<b>803</b>	-	<b>838</b>	-
<b>594</b>	136	<b>629</b>	131	<b>664</b>	130	<b>699</b>	129	<b>734</b>	129	<b>769</b>	-	<b>804</b>	-	<b>839</b>	-
<b>595</b>	132	<b>630</b>	127	<b>665</b>	132	<b>700</b>	134	<b>735</b>	-	<b>770</b>	-	<b>805</b>	-	<b>840</b>	-

S/N = Serial Numbers; RT = Remission Times

Data Obtained from University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH)

## Appendix 2

Censored Data for AIDS Patients

S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST
<b>1</b>	113	<b>36</b>	72	<b>71</b>	103	<b>106</b>	80	<b>141</b>	8	<b>176</b>	125+	<b>211</b>	125+	<b>246</b>	125+
<b>2</b>	5	<b>37</b>	125	<b>72</b>	71	<b>107</b>	6	<b>142</b>	34	<b>177</b>	125+	<b>212</b>	125+	<b>247</b>	125+
<b>3</b>	53	<b>38</b>	5	<b>73</b>	92	<b>108</b>	91	<b>143</b>	2	<b>178</b>	125+	<b>213</b>	125+	<b>248</b>	125+
<b>4</b>	6	<b>39</b>	1	<b>74</b>	60	<b>109</b>	51	<b>144</b>	115	<b>179</b>	125+	<b>214</b>	125+	<b>249</b>	125+
<b>5</b>	14	<b>40</b>	85	<b>75</b>	65	<b>110</b>	66	<b>145</b>	73	<b>180</b>	125+	<b>215</b>	125+	<b>250</b>	125+
<b>6</b>	102	<b>41</b>	40	<b>76</b>	90	<b>111</b>	116	<b>146</b>	43	<b>181</b>	125+	<b>216</b>	125+	<b>251</b>	125+
<b>7</b>	75	<b>42</b>	107	<b>77</b>	65	<b>112</b>	98	<b>147</b>	5	<b>182</b>	125+	<b>217</b>	125+	<b>252</b>	125+
<b>8</b>	3	<b>43</b>	5	<b>78</b>	82	<b>113</b>	81	<b>148</b>	42	<b>183</b>	125+	<b>218</b>	125+	<b>253</b>	125+
<b>9</b>	61	<b>44</b>	66	<b>79</b>	49	<b>114</b>	69	<b>149</b>	5	<b>184</b>	125+	<b>219</b>	125+	<b>254</b>	125+
<b>10</b>	23	<b>45</b>	102	<b>80</b>	23	<b>115</b>	33	<b>150</b>	12	<b>185</b>	125+	<b>220</b>	125+	<b>255</b>	125+
<b>11</b>	39	<b>46</b>	45	<b>81</b>	87	<b>116</b>	60	<b>151</b>	4	<b>186</b>	125+	<b>221</b>	125+	<b>256</b>	125+
<b>12</b>	8	<b>47</b>	80	<b>82</b>	60	<b>117</b>	83	<b>152</b>	121	<b>187</b>	125+	<b>222</b>	125+	<b>257</b>	125+
<b>13</b>	25	<b>48</b>	74	<b>83</b>	25	<b>118</b>	119	<b>153</b>	100	<b>188</b>	125+	<b>223</b>	125+	<b>258</b>	125+
<b>14</b>	1	<b>49</b>	57	<b>84</b>	3	<b>119</b>	27	<b>154</b>	75	<b>189</b>	125+	<b>224</b>	125+	<b>259</b>	125+
<b>15</b>	59	<b>50</b>	62	<b>85</b>	11	<b>120</b>	122	<b>155</b>	60	<b>190</b>	125+	<b>225</b>	125+	<b>260</b>	125+
<b>16</b>	1	<b>51</b>	89	<b>86</b>	36	<b>121</b>	79	<b>156</b>	1	<b>191</b>	125+	<b>226</b>	125+	<b>261</b>	125+
<b>17</b>	80	<b>52</b>	109	<b>87</b>	84	<b>122</b>	0	<b>157</b>	125+	<b>192</b>	125+	<b>227</b>	125+	<b>262</b>	125+
<b>18</b>	85	<b>53</b>	12	<b>88</b>	70	<b>123</b>	54	<b>158</b>	125+	<b>193</b>	125+	<b>228</b>	125+	<b>263</b>	125+
<b>19</b>	1	<b>54</b>	100	<b>89</b>	84	<b>124</b>	115	<b>159</b>	125+	<b>194</b>	125+	<b>229</b>	125+	<b>264</b>	125+
<b>20</b>	10	<b>55</b>	104	<b>90</b>	5	<b>125</b>	119	<b>160</b>	125+	<b>195</b>	125+	<b>230</b>	125+	<b>265</b>	125+

21	110	56	59	91	96	126	0	161	125+	196	125+	231	125+	266	125+
22	55	57	101	92	54	127	16	162	125+	197	125+	232	125+	267	125+
23	1	58	75	93	65	128	11	163	125+	198	125+	233	125+	268	125+
24	89	59	94	94	25	129	10	164	125+	199	125+	234	125+	269	125+
25	33	60	102	95	46	130	16	165	125+	200	125+	235	125+	270	125+
26	57	61	55	96	6	131	7	166	125+	201	125+	236	125+	271	125+
27	5	62	71	97	25	132	95	167	125+	202	125+	237	125+	272	125+
28	106	63	105	98	10	133	19	168	125+	203	125+	238	125+	273	125+
29	29	64	99	99	47	134	1	169	125+	204	125+	239	125+	274	125+
30	9	65	75	100	18	135	86	170	125+	205	125+	240	125+	275	125+
31	46	66	6	101	83	136	5	171	125+	206	125+	241	125+	276	125+
32	5	67	99	102	91	137	8	172	125+	207	125+	242	125+	277	125+
33	115	68	61	103	55	138	63	173	125+	208	125+	243	125+	278	125+
34	51	69	28	104	72	139	83	174	125+	209	125+	244	125+	279	125+
35	68	70	106	105	97	140	9	175	125+	210	125+	245	125+	280	125+

S/N = Serial Numbers; ST = Survival Times

Data Obtained from University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH)

S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST	S/N	ST
281	125+														
282	125+														
283	125+														
284	125+														
285	125+														
286	125+														
287	125+														
288	125+														
289	125+														
290	125+														

291	125+														
292	125+														
293	125+														
294	125+														
295	125+														
296	125+														
297	125+														
298	125+														
299	125+														
300	125+														
301	125+														
302	125+														
303	125+														
304	125+														
305	125+														
306	125+														
307	125+														
308	125+														
309	125+														
310	125+														
311	125+														
312	125+														
313	-														
314	-														
315	-														

S/N = Serial Numbers; ST = Survival Times

Data Obtained from University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH)